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The
Wandering Jew

And Other Poems

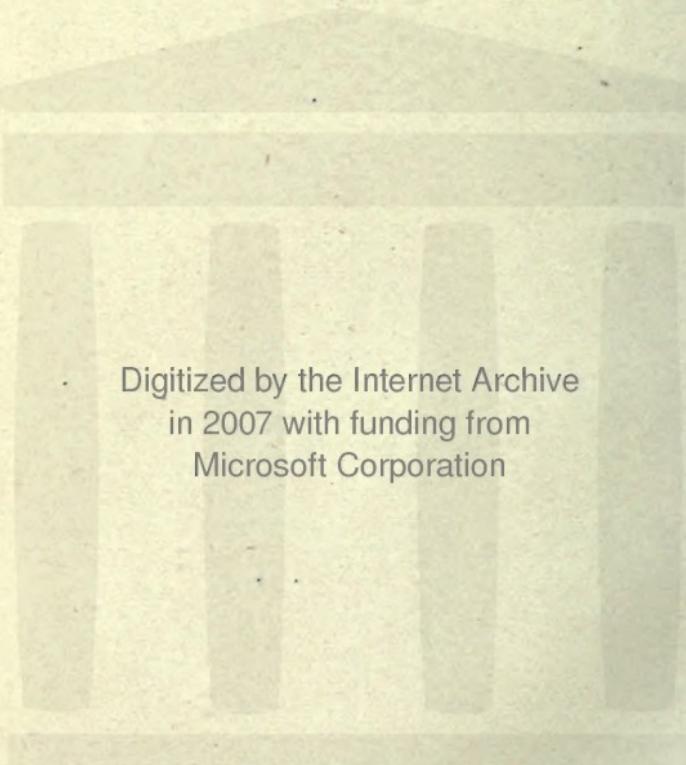
"WALTER ALEXANDER"

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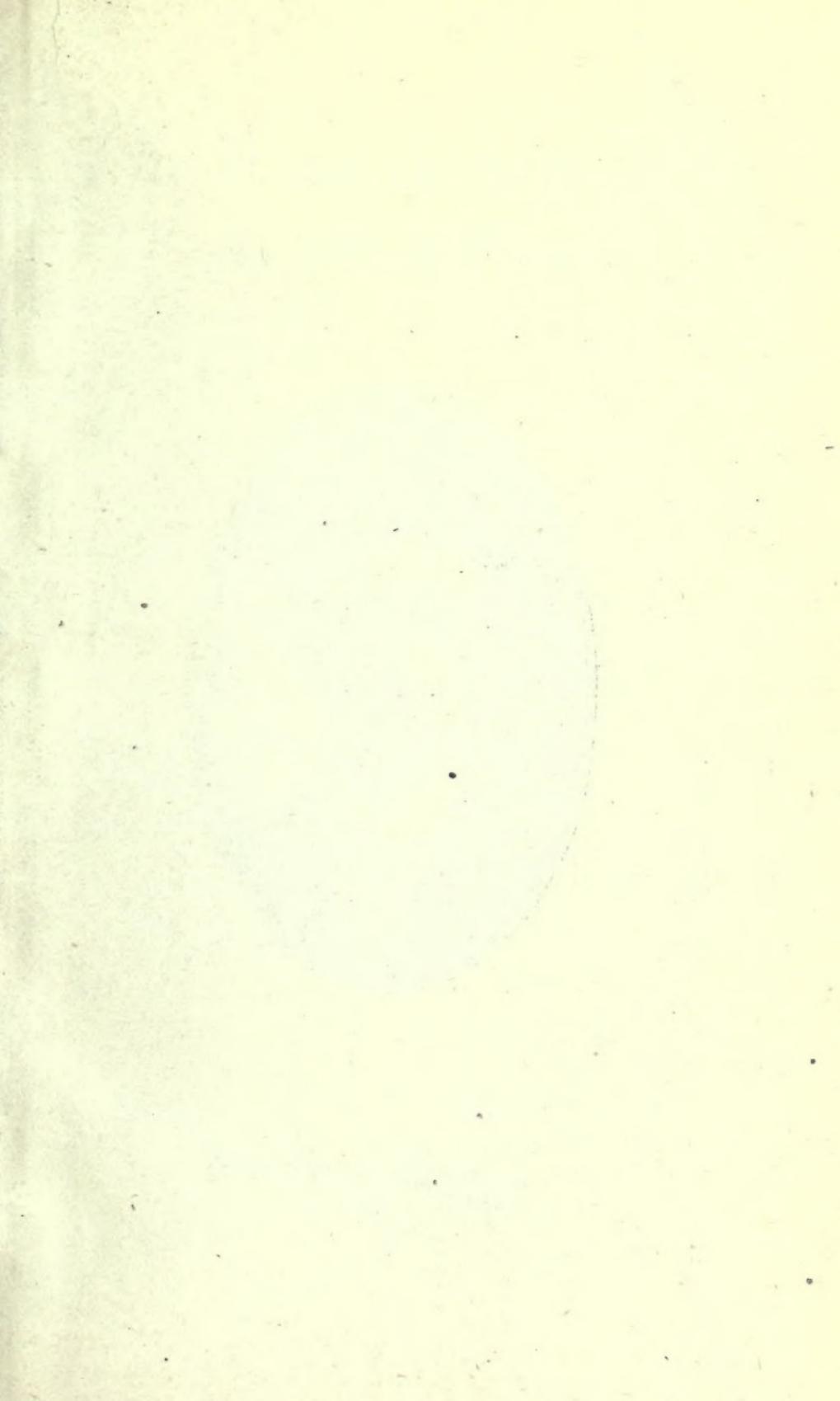


[Wraith, W.J.]

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W. J. Wraith

THE
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The Wandering Jew and Other Poems

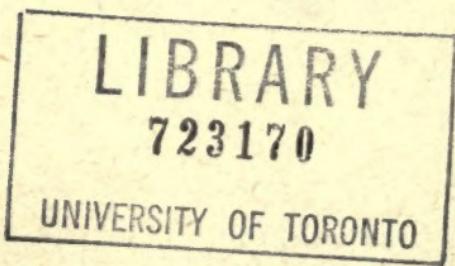


BY
"WALTER ALEXANDER"



*Lucknow, Ont.
The Sentinel Presses
1917*

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FOREWORD



MOST of these poems are juvenilia: otherwise the harp of Peace might have appropriately become a trumpet of War. Canada is so phenomenally a nation of verse writers, as witness the records of the civil service and other Governmental asylums, that only one with the soul of a slave would make apology for turning the innocence of blank paper into the finality of a printed book.

THE AUTHOR.

Toronto, Oct. 1, 1917.

*DEDICATORY SONNET
TO J. S. D.*

Blest in thy friendship when of small desert,
Who spoke no ill of Fancy's earlier flame,
Friend of past years! I deem thee still the same,
And sing thee now with more ambitious art.
Mine be no boast to share with thee a part
Of glory that I know not nor can claim:
My meed alone around thy honor'd name
To pour this tribute of a grateful heart.
Hear, as thou heard of old, the tension'd string
Sound to the passing wind of thought and make
Uncertain murmurings on its doubtful way.
So may thou, turning from the gift I bring,
Hope with a hope of mine that time shall wake
A richer music in a coming day!

THE WANDERING JEW

[*Christ, when being led to His crucifixion, begged a brief rest in the doorway of one, Ahaserus, a shoemaker in Jerusalem. Ahaserus smote him, saying, "Go on! Thou shalt soon rest!" Christ answered, "I shall rest, indeed, but thou shalt go on until the Judgment Day!" Since then Ahaserus has been wandering, immortal and unchanged, over the face of the earth. Plague and famine follow his footsteps. Everywhere the nails of his shoes leave the print of a Cross behind.*---Old Legend.]

ARGUMENT:---For the purposes of this poem many liberties have been taken with the old legend, and the Wandering Jew is represented as of superior original station in life. Walking along the highway at early morning, one thousand years after his condemnation, he overtakes another wayfarer, a young man, and, without at first revealing his own identity, thus addresses him:

1

Hail Traveller! Where journeyest thou?

Delightful must thy mission be:

This morning sun that lights thy brow

Is not more bright of face than thee.

Come, let me walk with thee awhile;

Light converse smoothes a lengthen'd way;

And if thou weariest in a mile,

No longer with thee shall I stay.

2

Where journeyest thou? Methinks I know:
A fair one waits by Hymen's bowers.
Soft winds from Eden round her blow,
And every footstep springs with flowers.
Thou'st wander'd far and waited long
To hear the pipe and cymbal play;
But joy shall come ere evensong—
This is, bold youth, thy bridal day!

3

Nay, start not. Thus the world doth go—
This varying world whose light and shade
Make all things seem a motley show
To eyes that will not be gainsaid.
Yestreen a sinless child was born;
To-morrow tolls the funeral bell
For some poor wretch who died forlorn
Because he loved his wine too well.

4

But now thy gladness! Well-a-day!
Perchance I wish such guerdon mine.
Shame fall the prophet old and gray
Would moralize on joys like thine!
So happy, happy, thou! Ah, me!
So happy! Life is all a-trim,
And on thine ears its ecstasy
Comes stealing like a marriage hymn!

So be it. Better thus, I ween,
Than weeping by a coffin cold;
But something, too, mine eyes have seen
Not all unworthy to be told.
Lo, scarce the sun in heaven's way
An hour hath risen. Let me tell
How once, before this beard was gray,
Strange things to me and mine befell.

The vines were green on Olivet,
The valley grass was green below,
When forth with errant steps I set,
A happy bridegroom, long ago.
Love was my lord and master then,
A mighty monarch. Unto him,
We plied the feast like merry men,
And kiss'd the goblet's purple rim.

It was in old Jerusalem.
Ah, wondering youth, I have been there!
Twelve handmaids twined a diadem
For a mortal maiden's hair.
So richly on her jewel'd hands,
The sheen of silken garments lay,
'Twas whisper'd to far eastern lands
By travell'd merchants of Cathay.

There came the high Sanhedrin then
With gifts of gold and blessings meet:
And merry youths and bearded men
To lay their tokens at her feet;
And many a Jewish maiden came
All blithely, to our festival,
To dance and sing and praise her name
Who was the fairest of them all.

Oh, where hath shone so bright an eye?
And where been heard a sweeter song?
Unwearied as the dance went by
I woo'd her from the passing throng.
So to the happy stars above,
Singing in heaven, went my prayer.
Forever thus to live and love,
And dwell forever in her care.

How in those moments was I bless'd
No tongues of men or angels tell.
Across bleak valleys of the west
A new-born glory seem'd to dwell,
Meseem'd that, never since mine eye
Beheld the sunlight wax and wane,
Such brightness was in any sky,
Such beauty on a desert plain:

11

Because of her. Oh, lover bold!
The world hath little changed, I trow:
Men loved as well in days of old
As any mortal loveth now.
And there were joys and sorrows then,
And smiles and tears, as sad or gay;
And all the graves in Hinnom's glen
Can never hide them quite away!

12

Her steps have gone from David's land;
Not ev'n these prophet eyes may see,
Beneath cold rocks and drifted sand
The tomb that waited thine and thee,
My Mariam, child of memory!
My given-of-God! My lovely one!
Dear as the patriarch's chosen son,
And dearer than all life to me!

13

Know ye the sadness of that thought?
Not all the blood of beasts could pay
A ransom for the deed I wrought,
Or stem my sorrows for a day.
Good comrade, lend thy doubting ear;
This mystic tale I tell is true:
For he who walks and murmurs here
Is cursed of God—The Wandering Jew!

14

Yea, I am he, the Undying One,
Condemn'd in never-crumbing clay,
For insult unto God's High Son
To wander till the Judgment Day.
And how that deed of death was done,
And how the double curse befell,
While still I wander on and on
There's that within me bids me tell.

15

It was in old Jerusalem;
Nor weary yet of song were we,
When up the city streets there came
A dark procession toilsomely.
They blew from many a brazen horn,
They shouted in their revelry,
Till o'er Mount Zion's summit borne,
Wild echoes answer'd fitfully.

16

Close by that long and narrow way
There stood a house of ranged stone:
A pleasant place it seem'd that day—
It was her dwelling and mine own!
There thronged on many a cushion'd seat,
And sipping oft the vinted cheer,
We linger'd in our cool retreat
And watch'd the clamouring host draw near.

17

They came: It was a rabble band
From Life's low haunts and alleys sprung.
Death weapons gleam'd in every hand,
And murder spake from every tongue.
No dream of glory sped them on;
No Jew or Roman there would die;
They shouted doom to one alone—
IT WAS THE CHRIST OF CALVARY!

18

Why is it, can ye tell me why,
Such joy the armed huntsman feels
To see a stricken roebuck fly
With barking demons at its heels?
More strange that ever in a day
When Love hath touched the human will,
One man his fellow man will slay,
Or gather'd thousands cry to kill!

19

And I, who thought as others then—
Who loved but knew no charity—
Thrice guilty I of Jewish men
Who open'd not mine eyes to see!
Had then the voice of Mercy spoken,
Had Pity warm'd one hidden tear,
One gentle heart had not been broken,
And I had never mourn'd it here!

20

But next He comes, the Holy One!
Ah, little, little thought we then,
That Christ we knew as Joseph's son
Was king of angels and of men!
The crimson spear points prick'd Him on;
A crown of wounding thorns He wore:
Till, faint and weary and undone,
He droop'd as if to rise no more.

21

I moved a little way to see
With her, my wondering, timorous bride:
When suddenly He spake to me,
And I perceived Him at my side.
Perchance he loved that gentle face,
That heart which never beat in guile;
Only, within our dwelling place
He ask'd to pause and rest awhile.

22

Her eyes rain'd pity while He spake;
She sped to bring Him cooling wine:
But straight an angry hissing brake,
And fear possess'd this heart of mine.
I cursed His name in Jewish pride;
I shamed Him to th' applauding throng:
“Go, Jesus, go thy way!” I cried:
“Thou’lt find a resting place ere long!”

23

With that a shadow dimm'd mine eye;
There came a glow of spectral flame;
One look of awful majesty
Shot weakness through my trembling frame.
And thus He spake and turned away:
"My doom of death was writ before;
I soon shall rest--but, from this day,
Thou shalt go on forevermore!"

* * * * *

24

Thou'st heard, I ween, the story told,
('Tis told by every land and sea)
Of how He died in ages old
Upon the cross of Calvary.
That night a sudden darkness came;
There came a burst of sudden sound;
The skies were rent with forked flame
And reeling earthquakes shook the ground.

25

That night in Old Jerusalem
Such things by mortal eyes were seen,
That young babes died by their mothers' side,
And many a strong man wept, I ween.
Wild winds o'er-swept the mountain close;
The temple *vail* was rent in twain;
And forms of buried saints arose
And walked the city streets again.

26

That night, that night, there came to me
 Amid the tumult and the dread,
The memory of His prophecy,
 The sacred vengeance of the Dead.
Where'er I turned my fearful eyes
 Amid the glimmer and the gloom,
White sheeted phantoms seem'd to rise,
 And visions of an opening tomb.

27

Then heard I—or I seem'd to hear—
 Thrice sounded ere the dawn of day—
A whisper in mine anguish'd ear,
 “Rise, guilty one! Away! Away!”
Then, hoping, fearing, as before,
 Reluctant for the lingering dawn,
I heard a stern voice say once more,
 “Rise, guilty one! Go on! Go on!”

28

Ah, then, how vain all sorrow's sighs—
 As they forevermore shall be!
And vain the light of those sad eyes
 That shed their crystal drops for me!
Ev'n as I wept, the summons came—
 “Go on! Go on!”—I could not stay!—
And clasp'd her once, and breathed her name—
 “Farewell! Farewell!”—and went my way!

29

Deep darkness cover'd all the land.
Deep darkness was within mine eye.
Far off by Kedron's shaly strand
I heard the trooping jackals cry.
Cold fell the night dews on my hand,
Fell colder on my mazed brow,
When forth, by Heaven's dread command
I wander'd—as I wander now!

30

Bright morning brake upon the land;
A joyful light, a happy day.
Far as the human eye hath scann'd,
Peace like the dawn of Eden lay.
Where late the wail of woe was heard,
All silent was the world, and still;
And songs of many a mating bird
Came down from Zion's rocky hill.

31

And was it but a silly thought,—
The remnant of a sickly dream?—
Some phantom that my soul had wrought
Of storms and shadows? In the gleam
Of yonder high and heavenly sun
Back to mine own hearth will I stray
And greet that pale and weeping one
Who waits my coming there! Straightway,

32

Out of the far blue dome of heaven,
Out of the cloudless eastern sky,
Came a stern voice, as yester-even
Came from the Dead of Calvary.
An unseen hand withheld me then;
I heard those awful accents say:
“Because ye cursed the King of men,
It shall not be! Away! Away!”

33

Ah, whither away at dawn of day,
Whither away doth the wild bird flee?
Tempests may spring beneath its wing,
But ever it knoweth the nesting tree.
And whither away, Oh, whither away,
Great Jehovah! biddest Thou me?
I drift in the dark like a helmless barque,
But ever I move at a word from Thee!

34

Oh, the bird may flee over land and sea,
Till wing be weary and eye grow dim:
And ever again to its mate in the tree
It cometh, singing a joyful hymn.
And the bride may wait by the city gate
Till she is weary and old and gray,
But nevermore to his own house door
Cometh the one who was cursed that day!

35

Alone I went when the world was still.
(Patient friend, I crave thy care.)
I saw three crosses on a hill,
And three white doves sate crooning there:
Three crosses, and a sepulchre
Wherein the Mighty One was laid;
And the marrow of my bones 'gan stir;
I fled - for I was sore afraid.

36

For His presence fill'd the air,
And His words were in my soul;
Frenzy of a deep despair,
Wrapp'd me in its flaming stole.
Cursed I then my hour of birth,
Cursed the Dead Man in the ground,
Till all the valleys of the earth,
Seem'd echoing the doleful sound.

37

Straight, before me then and after,
Come like vultures to their prey,
Demon voices, demon laughter,
Mock'd me on my cursed way.
Uprose a phantom cross before me,
All cold and shadowy. Anon,
Like the sound of some loud trumpet
Came that Voice: "Go on! Go on!"

38

Ah, what a sight that peaceful morn
In old Judea's hills was seen,
By the sower of the corn,
And the cattle on the green!
One who was of woman born,
Like a hunted deer went by,
Fleeing from the face of heaven.
Patient comrade, it was I!

39

Fleeing from the face of heaven!
Yea, mine eyes did surely tell
Sorrows had to me been given
Deeper than the deeps of hell.
Fled the seedsman from his corn,
Fled the ring-dove from its bough,
When that man of woman born
Passed:—they liked him not, I trow.

40

Would I rest by field or river,—
Would I shield me from the sun,—
Drink or sleep—above me ever
Spake the Voice: “Go on! Go on!”
Then the cross moved on before me;
Cried those demon tongues; and then
Mighty winds of heaven upbore me
And I rose and fled again.

41

Away, away! Far, far away!
Whither away no man could tell.
Uprose the sun at dawn of day,
Again at even down he fell:
Till far behind the glooming hills
The golden temple ceased to glow,
In the city of my fathers
A thousand years ago!

42

Away, away! Far, far away!
Ever away my feet must flee!
Uprose the sun at dawn of day;
Again at even down sank he;
Till thrice he cross'd the favoring skies,
And thrice sank in the salty sea,
When a wondrous vision seem'd to rise,
And still'd my heart in me.

43

Uprose a form of beauty then,
A maiden wondrous fair,
With bridal robes upon her,
And roses in her hair.
Her eyes look'd up to heaven,
Her hands were clasp'd in prayer,
And fast her glistening tear drops fell
Upon the desert there.

44

No word, no sound she utter'd,
 But turn'd to me—and lo!—
 It was the bride I wedded
 As but an hour ago!
 She stretch'd her arms, she beckon'd me;
 I fled to her—I would not stay;—
 But swifter than a beam of light,
 A cloud received her from my sight,
 And like a vision of the night
 She pass'd—she pass'd away !

45

In clouds of glory pass'd she—
 'Fore God, I know it so!—
 That maiden whom I wedded
 A thousand years ago!
 And I cried dumb cries to heaven
 That I follow her anon;
 And the hand of God was on me,
 And he said: “Go on! Go on!”

* * * * *

46

Ah, let my tongue have freedom now;
 My wisdom makes me bold.
 Not every man like thee, I trow,
 Hath talked with one so old.
 I am a prophet and a king;
 Mighty the deeds I dream and do;
 I tell of many a wondrous thing;—
 'Fore God, I would they were not true!

47

Yestreen two holy Abbots came
Conversing down the broad highway.
“Peace to thee, stranger! Tell thy name,
And shelter in our walls, we pray.”
“Good fathers, mine a curious fame;
My Master will not let me stay;
But while our journeys lie the same
I'll follow till ye say me nay.”

48

“Thy feet, O friend, seem travel worn.
Thou speakest accents sad and slow.”
“Fathers, I rest not, night or morn;
I bear a fearful weight of woe.”
“Speak, friend: if that thy heart is ill,
God's mercy yet we offer thee.”
“Vain, fathers, all thy curious skill.
I saw the Christ of Calvary!”

49

“Thy words, O friend, are strange and wild.
What sacred token bringest thou?”
“O ye, by dim-eyed faith beguiled—
Behold this mark upon my brow!
If that ye cannot understand—
Behold, where'er my footsteps fare,
By flinty rock, by yielding sand,
The image of a cross is there!

50

"Ten centuries round the rolling earth
Those fatal tokens have I borne,
In grief that quenches human mirth—
The madness of a soul forlorn.
With cancer'd lips and snaky fold
Time wraps my dull mortality,
And sayeth evermore, 'Behold!
Behold the cross of Calvary!'"

51

"Thy words, O friend, are strange and wild:
And may we further question thee?"
"Yea, in the name of Mary's child!
Speak in the tongues of old Chaldee—
Speak in all tongues of mortal men,
Of all things known by land and sea—
And ye shall have my answer then!
I cursed the Christ of Calvary!"

52

Long, long they talk'd, and question'd long:
And much of wondrous did I tell.
They sang yestreen no evensong,
They rang yestreen no vesper bell.
"God rest thy troubled soul! Amen!"
Methought at last I heard them say.
"God's love be with you, holy men!
I wander till the Judgment day!"

What know they more of God and heaven,
Because they wear the mitred cowl?
He telleth best of sins forgiven
Who toils and triumphs in his soul.
Mine ears have heard another tone
That speaketh to all dying clay:
The wail of wearied Solomon,
The crash of kingdoms pass'd away!

He[^]arken ye, hearken ye! Words more wild
Would blanch thy cheek like autumn's grass.
Trembles the bright-eyed, wondering child,
The laughing maiden, when I pass.
I come from ruin'd Babylon,
From haunts of old captivity;
And the hoary shades of years agone
Encompass me.

My kindred sleep: no more I weep:
My passion and my tears are done.
Old Zion's hills their dust shall keep,
But hope or respite I have none.
Forever with sad steps and slow,
From dawning till the break of dawn,
Like winds of heaven that veer and blow,
Here still I wait and wander on.

Here still I wait: this earthly state
Brings never death nor change to me;
My sorrow hath no written date,
My heart no unborn misery.
Changeless amid the things that change,
And deathless where all creatures die,
From age to age my sorrows range,
From life to Immortality.

The hand of God is over me;
The voice of God is in mine ear.
I see a sign ye cannot see;
I hear a sound ye cannot hear.
Ever before my weary eyes
Uprears a phantom cross. Anon,
Like thunder from still summer skies,
There comes a Voice: "Go on! Go on!"

Yea, ever on, by field and town,
By peaceful land and troubled sea;
I rest not when the sun goes down,
Nor when from darkness cometh he.
The fish may slumber in the deep;
The child upon its mother's knee;
To all men cometh death's cold sleep,
But never cometh sleep to me.

59

Last night I stood by Athen's walls:
I saw the gray bats flitting home.
Soon, soon my blighting shadow falls
Far off, by Denmark's drifting foam.
Fair summer lands lie stretch'd between,
Array'd in bridal beauty now;
To-day, the grass is lush and green;
To-morrow—Hear me, hear me, thou!

60

Tomorrow, many a' curious eye
Shall gaze upon another sight;
A ghost, they'll say, hath wandered by
In the still watches of the night.
Ah, little, little do they deem
How near that pitying spirit now!
But I shall break their pretty dream
Forever! Hear me, hear me, thou!

61

The hand of God is over me.
The voice of God is in mine ear.
No tombing sod shall cover me;
No waters be my sepulchre.
Like some still flame of ghostly fire
That burneth by a ghostly sea,
Sinks not, nor ever mounteth higher
Forever, so is life to me.

By chill morass and jungle wild,
I've lain me in the hope to die.
Strange things about me blink'd and smiled:
 The fierce hyena wander'd nigh;
Grim serpents and the tiger there
 Drew near me in my reedy bed;
Paused, trembled, sniff'd the tainted air,
 And through the darkness fearful fled.

Three times from Jungfrau's cloudy height
 I leaped me to the crags below.
Three times a demon stay'd my flight
 And dropped me as the flaky snow.
Three times in Ocean's briny deep
 I leaped me from its rocky strand;
Three times the waters waked from sleep
 And cast me living back to land.

Three times where Etna's molten flood
 Seethes with an everlasting din,
Praying the Godhead where I stood
 I plunged me to the hell within.
Three times athwart the lurid sun
 The angry mountain spat me by.—
God pity, God pity the helpless one
 Who cannot die!

65

Go tell the sorrows ye have felt!
Go number every secret woe!
Go bid the stars of heaven melt
And tears like Babel's waters flow!
Thrice happy if thy bodied soul
Forever by the templed Nile
Might float where oozy currents roll,
And woo the slimy crocodile!

66

Wearily hangs my flesh on my bones;
Wearily beats my heart below;
Wearily on with sighs and groans,
Forever and ever must I go.
My head is bent, my steps are slow.
Wearily on the round earth rolls.—
Perchance she mourns with a secret woe
For the pride of human souls!

67

Weary, weary am I now;
Weary with weight of memory.
Like snows on old Mount Hermon's brow,
So fall the endless years on me.
For dying ears thy song shall be.
Ever the voice of man makes moan,
Like winds on cedar'd Lebanon,
Mournfully, most mournfully;

Echoing back to that old earth,
That memoried region old and dim,
Where first my guilty soul had birth
And sang its bridal hymn.
Peace, peace to every wedded bride!
Peace to the children of her name!
The glory was with Him who died,
But mine the sorrow and the shame!

Cold as the beams of Arctic light;
As silent and as sure as they;—
Ageless, immortal, garbed in might;—
Companion of all suffering clay;—
Still onward strains my yearning sight:
Not ever shall my wanderings stay,
Till heaven's last star is quench'd in night,
And earth in vapors pass away!

* * * * *

What shadows these that vex mine eyes?
What phantoms these that toil and spin?
The burden of ten centuries
Hath somewhat dull'd my sense within.
Methinks within that cloak of thine
I hear the white bones rattle now;
And thou art happy! God divine
Be with thee! Hear me, hear me, thou!

71

Tomorrow ere the sun arise,
A hot and blasting wind shall blow;
The clouds shall vanish from the skies;
The summer streamlet cease to flow.
Soon, soon, in all the fruitful land
Where happy peoples now are seen,
Disease and famine, hand in hand,
Shall strew their corpses on the green.

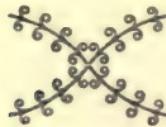
72

Aye, many a maiden in those hours,
Shall perish in her beauty's bloom;
The hands that plucked her bridal flowers
She heap the cold sods on her tomb.
And many a gallant youth and fair,
Who walks in manhood's glory now,
Shall fall like stricken cattle there,
Unheeded! Hear me, hear me, thou!

73

And what of thine and what of thee,
My comrade? Let thy prayers arise
In thanks to Him whose charity
Hath veil'd the future from thine eyes.
There's one shall be a bride to-day:—
Speed, speed, to greet her; gently tell
There pass'd a stranger down the way
Who wisheth thee and all men well.

Here part we now. The lamp of day
Draws upward. Shall I call thee friend ?
No parting meed of hope I pray;
 No riddle read thee to an end.
Lo, Azrael's seal is on thy brow,
 And in thy heart the seeds of sorrow!
Farewell! 'Tis meet I leave thee now—
 For thou or thine shall die to-morrow!



SONNET
ON THE WANDERING JEW

O, soul of Man! when once the bonds that bind
Thee, pent and struggling, to thy house of clay,
Like brittle threads are snapp'd, as singers say,
And thou to heaven, thy form to earth, consign'd:
In that high world thou mayest joy to find—
Remembering then how brief thine earthly stay—
Love breathed on thee from every passing wind,
And all thy sorrows linger'd but a day.
O'er yon green grave shall gleam the summer sun;
There loitering odors fill the evening air;
There echo shouts of children at their play.
Mourn thou alone for him, the Undying One,
Who sees forever in life's long despair,
Earth's never ending ages pass away!

TO AN AUTUMN FLOWER

1

Lone waif of the season! why thus are ye peeping
Above the cold hill-side where wintry winds rave?
Why now are ye not with the lovely ones sleeping
Safe down in the earth that will soon be your grave?
Say, was it the songs of the summer ye dream'd of,
Or was it the love of her beauty ye bore,
That ye rise, like a ghost of the season ye seem'd of,
To gaze on a vision that waits thee no more?

2

But late, when the merry birds carroll'd together,
When honey-bees sipp'd of the nectar of flowers,
Ye slept all the days of the sunshiny weather,
Nor heeded the calling of zephyrs and showers.
Now dimm'd are the skies, and no music shall greet thee;
From the fields and the forests all glory is gone;
Thou comest when never a sunbeam shall meet thee,
To bloom on the breast of the bleak world alone.

3

Hadst blossom'd with green grasses growing around thee.
Or mingled thy breath with the rose of the glen,—
Thus circled by beauty some eye might have found thee;—
But who would have dream'd of thee, sung of thee then?
Here now, 'mid the wastes of the fallow fields lying,
Where never the dead ones left promise or sign,
So lonely thou seemest, so near to thy dying,
More lovely thou art for the fate that is thine.

Farewell! I have gazed but a moment, unknowing;
The next I am gone;—and as sudden shall be
Thy doon, when these blasts o'er the brown meadows blowing
Have heap'd the white snows of the winter on thee.
Linger thou still, till thy frail form is broken;
To thee come no terrors of Death or the tomb;
But deep in my heart thou hast left me a token;
And voices have sung to me, out of the gloom:—

“Mourn not for the flowers whose beauty has faded;
Nor deem that such beauty was given in vain.
Immortal in death as the Love that first made it,
It dies but to rise from its ashes again.
Tho' found 'mid the world's desolation, unattended,
Un-named and uncherish'd, unwept by a tear,—
Perchance 'twas the crown of its days that have ended,
To gladden one eye that hath look'd on it here.”

ANGER

Two voices from opposing poles;
Two passions in two human souls;
Two tongues that speake without a need;
Two wounds that never cease to bleed!

NIGHT IN THE FOREST

1

The winter day is dying fast:
A darker haze o'erspreads the sky;
Asleep at last the mid-day blast
Rests from its own wild minstrelsy.
Here, where the pines in kingly pride
Recline against the glimmering heaven,
I wander by the forest side,
And wait the coming of the even.

2

The forest sleeps—how deep that sleep!
Like some dead giant free from pain,
Waiting an hour when back shall creep
His soul to its dark home again.
The forest sleeps; and o'er that sleep,
Unbroken till the tempest call,
Eternal eyes their vigil keep,
And heavenly fingers spread the pall!

3

Slow musing on in fearless fear
Thro' domes and arches crown'd with snow,
I see a last bright gleam appear
And kindling north-lights dance below.
There flits a form of fading light—
A smile that lingers ev'n when gone;
And, compass'd by the shades of night,
I tread the forest halls alone.

Alone!—and sever'd Life, from thee,
Save in mine own heart beating near!
Alone! but sweet that thought to me;
For Peace hath rear'd an altar here.
Thrice fair the gloomy forest now
In these dun robes of darkness drest:
Day's beauties wither on its brow,
But Death's own splendour fills its rest.

Scarce can I mark the winding way,
The heedless turnings to and fro,
That tell where rabbits held their play
Last night upon the virgin snow.
From pine to pine, from spray to spray,
All day the restless nuthatch roved;
From crest to crown and far away,
For me no forest sprite hath moved.

All silent still, the endless train
Of moments speeds to midnight's prime;
I turn me hastening back again
To where the distant sleigh-bells chime.
Beyond the solemn pines a star
Keeps its lone watch o'er northern hills.
I leave the woods where mysteries are;
And night the voiceless vastness fills.

"AS SHIPS UPON A TWILIGHT SEA"

As ships upon a twilight sea
That darkling near each other's sight,
Pause not but speak and forward flee,
And part forever in the night:
O loved and lost and ever dear!
Thrice beautiful to memory now!
So met we once, so parted there
Forever. Where, O where art thou?

Perchance their name and whence they came
And where their golden harbors lie,
They ask and tell, then bid farewell
And vanish from each watching eye.
O loved and lost! remembering thee
I pray while time and tide may sever,
There's some far haven by the sea
Where soul with soul unites forever!

THE PHANTOM FISHERMAN**A BALLAD OF BRETONY**

1

The tale of a Phantom Fisherman: "Tis told in Brettony
When the boatman's fire is burning and the storm is on the sea;
And, listening thro' the darkness, above the billows' roar
They hear him crying, crying, as he drags his nets ashore!

* * * * *

2

A drouth was on the land and a curse was on the sea;
And the fishers set their nets, and they left them hopefully:
But never glanced a scale or fin thro' the waters of the deep;
And the bread of life grew scarcer, and the women 'gan to weep.

3

Up spake the holy father ('twas said that in his care
For the people whom he loved he could move the heavens
with prayer):
"God's judgment is upon ye! Oh, will ye never know
That, tho' the harvest be delayed, ye must reap the seed ye sow?"

4

"There was a time of plenty (as still such time might be),
When your boats rode to the gunwale with the bounty of the
sea;
Ye knew no want nor sorrow; your hearts beats happily;
But the gracious God who gave it all --what thanks received He?

5

"No blessed candles burned ye. No offering graced His shrine.
What ye earn'd by day in labor, ye spent by night in wine.
Ye raked the teaming waters as a miser rakes for gold,
While the poor man died of hunger and his children cried
with cold!"

6

"But now that day is ended: your pride shall rule no more.
The sea withholds its harvest, and famine stalks the shore.
The wrath of God is kindled: Behold, ye sons of men.
How soon the darkness cometh when He smileth not again!"

7

"Deem not that I can save you, nor prayers of one alone.
For the sins you have committed yourselves must now atone.
Cast out this idle scorning; let faith assume her reign:
Till, meek of heart as children, ye sue for love again!"

8

"Go pray, my suffering people! Go, pray, as in the light
Of the moon of ancient Canaan Jacob wrestled all the night!
When the voice of Sorrow speaketh, the heart of Mercy hears;
And the God you have forsaken may give solace for your tears!"

9

Then rose their supplications: They prayed as souls in pain
Till thrice across the autumn skies the sun return'd again;
And with the dawning of the light upon another day
They knew their sins forgiven, and their sorrow pass'd away.

10

All, all save one who walk'd alone, remorseful not nor gay;
He smiled a smile of bitter scorn to see his brethren pray:
"There is no God in heaven and the fish are in the sea;
And if these prayers will bring them, they will come the same
to me!"

11

Then out by early morning the white sails bounding go;
Out to the wastes of the wide, wide sea, where the long nets
drift below.

They peer thro' the foaming waters; they reef the straining sail;
And lo! the sight that greets them! and the glint of the shin-
ing scale!

12

The sea was filled with fishes; for leagues on leagues away
They churn'd the brimming waters like a wild sea horse at
play.

The nets were cramm'd and bursting: thro all that gladsome
day

The toiling fishers drew them in; they drew till even gray

13

Came down across the restless brine; and still within the deep
Long, laden meshes linger'd with their treasure in their keep.
Then said the weary fishers, as they sang by daylight's hour,
"We praise the God of heaven for His goodness and His
power!" —

14

All, all save one who moved alone: no word of praise said he:
He smiled a smile of bitter scorn to think such things should be:
"There is no God in heaven, and the fish are in the sea:
And if a prayer hath brought them, they have come the same
to me!"

15

But now the night hath fallen. Dark clouds are in the sky.
A sullen wing begins to moan. The tempest gathers nigh.
Haste, haste, ye Breton fishermen! Lay by your nets no more!
Your burden'd boats are laboring now, and 'tis many miles to
shore!

16

They lift the clinging anchor; they free the fetter'd sail.
Like trooping sea-birds home they fly before the rising gale.
Now, tho' the wild waves topple round, and drifts the blinding
spray,
Their hearts are filled with gladness for the mercies of the day.

17

All, all save one who stayed alone: no gladness knoweth he:
He cried loud curses on the night; he cursed the stormy sea:
"There is no God in heaven, there are fools in Brettony!
By all the devils of the wave! this shall not hinder me!"

18

"My boat holds many fishes, my nets are in the deep;
Till every netted fin be mine, these eyes shall never sleep!
Pipe up, pipe up, ye merry winds! Ye billows louder roar!
Tho' ye rage till heaven tremble, I will drag my nets ashore!"

19

The lightnings flash, the thunders roar; across the narrowing
way

Behold, ye Breton fishermen, the beacon in the bay!
Friends are waiting, home is near! Breathe another prayer!
Ere the fleeting hour is past, ye shall find a haven there!

20

But what that sound that greets them! and whose that lonely
sail

Comes beating out of darkness like a spectre of the gale?
Wild fires are on the mast-head, red flames are on the prow;
And they hear a loud voice crying.—Methinks I hear it now!

21

O, it was one who sailed alone that morn from Brettony;
Erstwhile he cursed the fall of night, he cursed the troubrous
sea;

"There is no God in heaven," he said; and o'er and o'er
Cried, "Rise, ye ocean devils, and help me to the shore!"

22

And the waters wage around him, and the devils hear his cry:
Like a forked flame from heaven bursts a terror on his eye:
Wild fires are on the mast-head, a black form on the prow;
And the boat leaps like an arrow,—as they can see it now!

23

The boat goes like an arrow; the while it passeth near,
They think of ocean's mysteries, and cross themselves in fear.
"There is no God in heaven!"—It is a maniac's cry;
And the fires go out and the boat goes down, and the harbor
lights are nigh.

24

They rode at early morning beside the peaceful shore;
And the holy father bless'd them, and the women wept no
more;
And they told their wondrous story with many a varying strain;
But the sail of the lonely fisherman, it cometh not again.

25

'Tis said that, in his sorrows, across the drifting tide
Forever thro' the midnight his boat is doom'd to glide:
Wild fires are on the mast-head, a demon on the prow;
And ever as he neareth land it fades before him now!

* * * * *

26

The tale of the Phantom Fisherman: 'Tis told in Brettony
When the boatmen's fire is burning and the storm is on the sea:
And, listening thro' the darkness, above the billows' roar
They hear him crying, crying, as he drags his nets ashore!



A FAREWELL
(IN MEMORY OF HOME)

Farewell ye green fields and the hills that enfold ye!
Farewell ye wild woods where the summer winds dwell!
No more in the love-light of youth I behold ye!
I bid ye forever, farewell and farewell!

There carol the larks from the blue heavens near them;
There calls the lone crow from the pine on the hill;
But never again as of old shall I hear them;—
Sweet echoes abide, but the music is still!

When riseth the summer moon, peaceful and mellow,
No holier scene on her vision shall fall
Than those meadow lands misty and ~~the~~ harvest fields yellow;—
For the glamour of Eden is over them all!

O, bright were the days when I dwelt in their presence;
And sweet was the voice of the lambkin at play!
And had I but known how my heart would have wearied,
I would not have wander'd so blithely away.

But still, when the stormy winds sigh in the gloaming,
Comes many a voice from the valleys of yore,
Calling me back from the paths I am roaming
To rest in their beauty, and sorrow no more.

Farewell ye green fields where the grasses are springing!
Ye woodlands so deep where my memories dwell!
The heart of the singer is sad in its singing.
Once more and forever, farewell and farewell!

*DAVID COPPERFIELD TO AGNES
WITH HIS BOOK*

"Oh, Agnes; oh, my soul! so may thy face be near me when I close my life indeed; so may I, when realities are melting from me like the shadows which I now dismiss, still find thee near me, pointing upward!"

1

Oh, thou! to whom in life's young day
My thoughts were link'd in friendship's name,
Unchanged while seasons pass away,
Still let me feel that tie the same.
While I may share thy trusting smile
And hear thy gentle voice, I know,
Whatever sorrows may beguile,
Time yet withholds its bitterest woe.

2

I think of thee in those glad hours
When life its early promise shed;
My way was mark'd with wasted powers,
But triumph waited on thy head.
Thou wert to me a guiding light;
And, brightening as the years have grown,
No beauty meets my later sight
But borrows radiance from thine own.

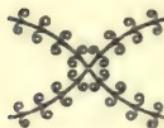
Thou hast not been as others are
That come and go and leave no sign;
But, steadfast as the seaman's star,
One form remains;—that form is thine.
'Mid storm and stress and rolling tide,
Where'er my wandering barque might roam,
Still thou hast been my friend and guide
And led the erring vessel home.

If ever from a thought of thee
I wander'd in unthinking train,
Forever came some hope to me
That turn'd me yearning back again.
My solace while I thus abide
To learn one lesson of the heart:
These forms of clay may sever wide,
But soul from soul can never part.

There is a love they cannot know
Who deem in spoken words it lies.
In deepest earth its roots must grow;
Its branches spread to farthest skies.
'Twas thus the early seed was sown
That blossoms in the verse I bring;
'Tis thus its later strength has grown
And shadows all I speak and sing

Read in the printed page I send
 Of her whose name was born of thine;
In friendship, she the perfect friend:
 In love, that friendship made divine!
Go read--and weep,—and with thy tears,
 While yet those crystal drops will fall,
Blot out the old unconscious years,
 And know that love the best of all!

Read, Agnes, read! And when thine eye
 Hath seen the long-drawn vision close,
May life's deep meaning, glancing by,
 But soothe thy heart to calm repose.
When other friends have come and gone
 And hopes have died in phantasy,—
First, last and loveliest I have known,
 Oh, be thou Agnes still to me!



LINES FOR AN ALBUM

As when, in the dark hour of death and decay,
We pass from the scenes of our labors away,
Some pledge of remembrance we fondly would give
To bid with the living our memory live:

O, thus, when thy glances fall sweetly no more
On him who has bask'd in their brightness before
May the verse that I leave wake a sigh or a tear;
And remember me then by the name written here!



AN EPITAPH

Here lies whom friend should never weep
Save only for his deeds undone;
Who squander'd talents kings might keep,
And murmur'd that he had not one.
Peace! peace! The tired one sinks to sleep.
In mercy let him slumber on!

AN AUTOGRAPH

'Tis said that men in other times,
 Resolved on love and chivalry,
Fought many a combat in their rhymes
 And vanquish'd many an enemy.

Ah, were the fair ones then as now,
 And love from them as sweet a token,
Small wonder if men fought, I trow,
 Till every heart and head were broken!

Thank God! those day of wrath are done;
 A nobler way the world discovers;
To-day we only rhyme for fun,
 And science helps all sighing lovers.

So let my little song have end;
 One simple thought is all its share:
I only write to please a friend,
 And leave the name of friendship there!

TO AN ANONYMOUS SLANDERER

Three things there are I love like thee,
And straightway I shall name them:
But, O, forgive, whoe'er you be,
If, naming, I shall seem to see
Too great a similarity,
And by my words defame them!

The first is that which creeps and crawls,
A thing of sealy fear,
By sun-baked rocks, adobe walls,
Or where the carrion buzzard calls,
And like a forked terror falls
On those who venture near.

The next is one of fish-like form
(But more than fish is he)
Which, ravening on others' harm,
Lurks by green isles and shore-sands warm,
And leaps when helpless creatures swarm,
The tiger of the sea!

The last is he of swarthy hue,
The native red man wild.
Alone he stalk'd the forest thro';
His arm was swift, his aim was true;
He sneak'd and struck and fled like you,
And boasted like a child!

The venom'd snake may sting again;
The shark may rend its prey;
The red man glory in his slain;
But you, whose jealous darts are vain—
Strike out, bold blade, with might and main!
You've proved your worth like they!

EXCUSE FOR NOT PAYING A VISIT

I thought this morn in merry wise,
That, ere the daylight ceased to be,
I'd leave a realm of cloudy skies
And spend a brighter hour with thee.

Alas for things of flesh and blood!
And Satan take this cruel weather!
The skies were wet, the roads were mud:
My hope and patience died together!

Yet mourn not at the long delay:
There is a joy for every sorrow:
If we have known no bliss to-day
We'll drink a deeper draught to-morrow.

And when again thine eyes shall see
My living features bending o'er thee,
Let this sweet truth thy comfort be:
My heart has long been there before me!

THE PROGRESSIVE PEASANT

No rickety, muddy-whaled, ould-fashioned phaeton,
But an autymobile for me,
Wid mohogany box an' black whales, an' a sate on
That will hould at a pinch at laste three!

I'll pawn the ould horse, I'll skin the ould cow;
Beg help to propel me canoe;
Use the tail ov me shirt to wipe off me brow—
But I'll have an auty, too!

I pities the chaps phwat thravels on bikes,
An' it's ne'er a phedesthrian I'll be;
Faith, "Be independent" 's the motto I likes
When I rides in an auty, ye see!

So, soon it's a lape from the ould plow rut
(Och, the thought ov it makes me snaze!)
To where I can laugh at the beggars on fut;—
An' I wants all the road, av ye plaze!

LINES

With a Wedding Gift of Fruit Dishes

Seven dishes: two for groom and bride,
And four for four good friends that come,
And one for all the guests that bide
Within the precincts of this home!

So may it be from day to day,
And every faithful dish be found,
Till seven little voices say,
“Please, papa, pass the fruit around!”



AN AUTOGRAPH

“Straws on the surface of the water flow;
He who would seek for pearls must look below.”
By words and deeds we judge a soul in part,
But life’s best gems lie hidden in the heart!

"LOVE ME, OH, LOVE ME, AND TURN NOT AWAY"

Love me, Oh, love me, and turn not away!
Sad are the night hours and weary the day!
Something I need that none other can pay!
Love me, Oh, love me, and turn not away!

Like a rose that is wither'd, a leaf that is shed,
The hopes of my being lay trampled and dead.
Like a blossom revived by the dew and the rain,
So leap they to life at thy coming again.

In the glance of thine eye, in the touch of thine hand
Comes joy, like the sun to a storm beaten land;
At a word from thy lips all my being doth move:
And heaven descends in the kiss of thy love.

Mine eyes are unshadow'd, my soul is unbound.
Long, long have I sought thee, and now I have found!
And, Oh, the wild rapture, in silence, alone,
To have thee, to hold thee, my loved and my own!

If thus from that garden of gladness and tears,
We wander'd alone in the dawn of the years,
No fears would affright me, no memories bind;
My joy would be with thee, my sadness behind!

Love me, Oh, love me! In passion I cry!
For thee I am living, without thee I die!
My star's in its heaven; I walk in its ray!
Love me, Oh, love me, and turn not away!

**“LIPS TO LIPS IN PASSION
PRESSING”**

Lips to lips in passion pressing,
As the bee the rose caressing,
 While the winds of night go sighing
 Thro' the branches of the pine:
Dost thou know it—canst thou feel it?
Heaven and earth shall not conceal it!
 From the depths of Love undying
 Comes this holy love of mine!

I have yearn'd for thee in gladness;
I have sighed for thee in sadness;
 I have found thee when I need thee,
 And the waiting was not vain.
All the barren years departed
Shall not leave me broken hearted,
 For thy gentle hand shall lead me
 Where the flowers bloom again.

Shall I ever know thee nearer?
Shall I ever call thee dearer?
 That I know not; darkly hidden
 Lies the future to mine eyes.
But my lonely heart goes singing
With the gladness thou art bringing,
 And a star of Hope unbidden
 Beckons on to Paradise.

Let me kiss thee and caress thee.
Tenderly I'll touch and bless thee,
 O my loved one, strangely given,
 Best and truest I have known!
Till the years of time are ended,
Till these hearts in dust are blended,
 In the realms of earth or heaven
 I shall claim thee as mine own!



AMOR SEMPITERNUS

[BY A FRIEND]

No heart was made for loneliness or sadness;
Some other beats with true responsive thrill;
And Love, tho' giv'n all vainly without gladness,
Is pure and holy still!

It is my faith that those who purely cherish
True love, no matter whether crown'd or cross'd,
Unite in that bright realm where griefs must perish
And nothing pure is lost!

Then, if not here, perhaps in those high regions,
In the great shadow of the Eternal Throne,
I'll single thee from all those shining legions,
And claim thee as mine own!

ODE TO SPRING

1

Arcadian spirit, child of Beauty, come!
First born of time and the pale wedded year!
At thy warm breath the wintry winds are dumb,
And the hoarse storm God stays his couched spear.
Thou, heralded by far off murmurous hum
Of cloud-born waters falling—rapt to hear
Wild wings beat northward in an April night—
Comest like Peace to some war smitten land,
Comest like memory to an olden tomb;
And earth, thy handmaid, joyously bedight,
Brings forth her blossoms, spreads her shining sand.
Arcadian spirit, child of Beauty, come!

2

Thy feet, thy feet are on the morning hills!
Shouts the blithe plowman down the furrow'd lea!
Speakest thou not with voice of rippling rills,
And wandering winds that stir the beechen tree?
Singest thou not, till earth and heaven thrills,
A song of Love and Immortality?
O, were ye but a form these lips might call,—
Flesh of white flesh, or goddess born apart
To dwell with men in some diviner day,
While now these tears of nameless gladness fall,
How would I clasp thee, bind thee to my heart,
And bid thee never never pass away!

This dying vision, this that strangely seems
 Of long past years, Ah, whither hath it fled?
Lowing of kine beside still meadow streams;
 Odors the pale blown lilies lately shed.
Now the grey Shadow of departed dreams
 Comes with her faded garlands on her head.
Perhaps, O spring, in some far Grecian glen
 Thou lingerest now, till yonder mellowing sun
Draws the white mantle o'er thy dreamless bed,
 Saying: Happiest he of all the race of men
Who keeps my hope and memories: he hath won
 A richer grain than autumn husbanded!



EPITAPH ON A PLOWMAN

Rest, weary hands, thy toil is done!
 Rest, faithful heart, and know no fear!
And thou, still sleeper, slumber on!—
 Thy glory and thy crown are near!
By God and Godhead loved and known,
 In Thee their noblest work They pay;
For heaven receives thee as its own,
 And earth is richer for thy clay!

THE DESERTED HOUSE

1

Dark falleth the night with its tempests and shadows:
 Sadly the autumn winds murmur and moan.
There, on the marge of the rain-beaten meadows,
 The lonely house stands in that darkness, alone.
The grass by the gateway lies tangled and sodden:
 All wither'd the vines over window and door.
No step ever treads where so many have trodden:
 For Life hath departed and cometh no more.

2

No more, when the might of the tempest hath broken,
 The ruddy lights gleam on the mantle and pane.
Hushed is the song and the word is unspoken
 Shall welcome a guest to those chambers again.
Only the wither'd vines cling in their dying;
 Only the autumn winds murmur and moan;
And echo is heard, like a ghost that is sighing
 For lips that are silent, a step that is gone.

3

They went in the days of their strength and their beauty
 The children that played in the garden and hall:
The young to their dreams and the old to their duty,
 And one to a scene that was strangest of all.
When wild in the woodlands the flowers were springing,
 She wander'd, as gay as the birds overhead:
But in the chill autumn she ceased from her singing,
 And left them forever,—the beautiful dead!

4

Then cold on the hearth fell the desolate embers;
In silence and sadness they laid her away:
And ever the rains of these gloomy Novembers
Seen weeping the blossom that perish'd that day.
O where is the soul, tho' its hope be in heaven,
That bows without grief to an Infinite Will:
That longs not again for the joys that were given,
Nor clings to the earth that embosoms them still!

5

And thou, who hast dream'd in the hours that were dearest
That never a shadow of sorrow fall
Till age had bedimm'd the bright eyes that were nearest.
And mouldering sunbeams congeal'd on the wall:
Farewell to thy dream! It believeth the waking;-
Hope dies in yon doorway, and, dying alone,
No heart beats response to the heart that is breaking:
For the soul of its brightness and beauty is gone.

6

So stood it at morn with its beauty around it:
So noon-day came down with a crown for its brow:
So cold and deserted the even hath found it;
And sorrow's deep midnight abides with it now.
Close up the dark house and regret not to leave it!
The last face hath vanished from window and door,
Thus hallow'd it stands till the cold earth receive it:-
For Death cannot enter where Life is no more!

“THE DEW DROP ON THE
BENDED FLOWER”

The dew drop on the bended flower
How tremulous and bright it lies,
When winds that wake at morning hour
Sleep silent in the greenwood bower,
And stars are in the quiet skies!

Twill vanish when the breezes blow
Or morning’s golden gate unbars:
But heaven and the starry glow
Are mirror’d in its depths below—
The heavens and the shining stars!

So have I seen in Beauty’s eye
A drop of tenderer lustre shine:
A tear that early smiles shall dry,
Or lost in Sorrow’s passing sigh,
But visioning a Hope divine:

Come day or darkness, cloud or rain:
Come winds below or suns above;
In every tear of joy or pain
Is mirror’d forth to man again
The heaven of a woman’s love!

A LEGEND OF LAUREL

[Many years ago, in the township of Laurel, Ontario, a little girl was murdered by some person or persons unknown, on her way to school. She was carrying her doll at the time. The doll was lost. Thereafter, for several months, her spirit appeared from time to time in the schoolhouse and elsewhere, frightening pupils and teachers away and almost necessitating the closing of the school. Finally a new teacher, a young man, bethought him to leave a doll on his desk one night. In the morning it was gone; it was found on the dead girl's grave. The ghost never appeared again.]

They see her in the silent night,
Or when the slanting sunbeams fall,
A little ghost-child garb'd in white,
Come searching for her missing doll!

In the glad morn of beauty hurl'd
Unfriended to a crimson bier,
She journey'd from the unseen world
To seek a cherish'd play-thing here.

If lonely in the spirit land
She wander'd all the summer days,—
No hand to hold her weary hand,
No friend to share her childish plays;

If pain and sadness fill'd her breast,
And Love no kiss of comfort gave:
Or only in a strange unrest
She linger'd near that lowly grave;

Or if, when angel hands had given
A gladness for her late despair,
She turn'd uncomforted from heaven
Because she had no dollie there:—

She told not; only, garb'd in white,
Soft flitting as the snow flakes fall,
In sunlight or the shadowy night
She searches for her missing doll.

Shaped in the form of other days,
She haunts the old, familiar room,
While playmates start ~~with~~ⁱⁿ wild amaze
To see that vision from the tomb.

Strangely and mournfully she cries,
Like winds that sweep the hollow ground;
And there is yearning in her eyes
For something that she hath not found.

Then one who bore a thoughtful face,
Regretful that a soul should grieve,
Came with a dollie to that place
And left it on his desk at eve.

They found it at the dawn of day
Amid the grasses on her grave;
And the sad ghost-child pass'd away,
Contented with the gift he gave.

No more they see her in the night,
Or when the slanting sunbeams fall, --
That little ghost-child garb'd in white;
For she hath found another doll!

Rest, little ghost-child garb'd in white!
While earth with changing beauty fills,
Thine be a peace as calm and bright
As summer on those Laurel hills!

Forgotten all the grief and pain,
The longing and the bitter tears,
May never sorrow break again
The cycle of thy heavenly years!

For those, who wandering here awhile,
To no sweet thoughts of heaven turn;
Who perish for a phantom smile,
And in the fires of passion burn:

Not vainly in the silent night,
One tender, trusting thought might fall,
Of some fair ghost-child garb'd in white
Whose heaven was a little doll!

PART OF NINETIETH PSALM

Oh, Thou! our stay and dwelling place
Since first the steps of time began;
Whose love no gathering years efface,
Nor Thou deny'st Thy creature man:

Before the mountains rose to sight,
Before the world from darkness came,
The starless vastness own'd Thy might;
And Thou wert then as now the same.

From power to power Thy being runs;
Thy greatness lives in all we see;
The coursing of a million suns
Is but a fleeting hour to Thee.

Thou speakest: At Thy dread command,
Behold, a living people rise!
Thou speakest: and in all the land
No more their presence meets Thine eyes!

As if a whelming flood came down,
Or tempest from the mountain steep.
They hear Thine awful voice alone
And sink to everlasting sleep.

So stands at morn th' ephemeral flower,
Array'd in all in beauty's store;
So dies ere evening's darkening hour,
And lifts its wither'd form no more!

PSALM 100*(For Music)*

Sing to the Lord all ye lands of Creation!

Glad be your voices and loud let them raise!
He is the God who hath brought you salvation!

Enter ye into His temples with praise!

Know ye the Lord He is God everlasting.

We are the lambs He hath nursed in His fold.
We are His people, the sheep of His pastures.

Sing, for His greatness hath never been told!

Sing to the Lord all ye peoples and nations!

He is the truth and the light of your ways!
His mercy endureth to all generations!

Enter ye into His temples with praise!

"A SPIRIT PASSED BEFORE MY FACE"

Job 4: 13-21

In visions of the silent night,
When deep sleep falls on weary men,
Meseem'd to my thought-troubled sight
A spirit pass'd before me then.
Dark, shadowy, formless, vast and cold,
Of God alone it seem'd to be;
And while the aguing fear sweats roll'd,
I heard a Voice that said to me:

"Is man more pure than God and just?
What virtue shall His servants claim?
His faithfulest He dared not trust,
Nor deem'd his angels free from blame.
Children of men, how vain your pride!
The moth survives your dying clay:
And, blind, to wisdom self denied,
Ye pass like driven dust away!"

MAIDEN'S EVENING PRAYER

1

The sunset fades along the skies
And Heaven unveils its starry breast.
Sad earth with all her mysteries
Feels now the balm of peace and rest.
While thus the long-drawn shadows fall
And darkness deepens to my sight,
Thou Christ, who know'st and pity'st all,
Be with my lonely heart to-night!

2

By day I stem the tides of strife;
I know Thee^{not}, but do not fear.
By night I touch the chords of Life
And feel the Holy Angels near.
Thus in each dark and silent hour
Forever in Thy faithful sight,—
Thou Christ, who spar'st Thy wrath and power,
Be with my humbled heart to-night!

3

Gay swinging on the aspen tree
The robin carols late and long;
His happiness is not for me
But all may share his cheerful song.
I, singing in my deep distress
While others deem my bosom light—
O, Thou, who cheer'st the comfortless,
Be with my longing heart to-night!

Afar I hear the chiming bells
Ring dulcet murmurs soft and low.
What depths of joy their music tells!
 What echoes of unutter'd woe!
So ring they for the wedded bride
 And for the mourner in his blight.
O Thou, who liv'd and lov'd and died,
 Be with each needy heart to-night!

The weary plowman leaves his plow:
 His day of peaceful toil is o'er;
But on the rolling ocean now
 The watchful sailor sleeps no more.
From the far fields of Palestine
 And those wild waves that own'd Thy might.
The care of all, O Christ, is Thine;--
 Be with each waiting heart to-night!

I think me of the hearts forlorn
 That know no comfort but Thy care.
I think me of the sorrows borne
 Which none but Thou canst know or share.
Thou taught in lone Gethsemane
 And last on Calvary's gloomy height,
Dear Christ, who suffer'd more than we,
 Be with each sorrowing heart to-night!

And some shall smile and some shall weep,
 And some shall toss in doubt and pain:
And some whose eyes now close in sleep
 Shall never wake to light again.
By every cot where sorrow lies
 Or slumber weaves a garland bright,
Bequeath, O Christ, thy sympathies!
 Guard Thou those helpless hearts to-night!

When once the drops of life are run
 The empty measure cannot fill.
Watch near us as Thou erst hast done,
 And lead us by Thy fountains still.
The wonders of Thy ways are Thine
 In darkness and the dawning light.—
Draw near, Thou Comforter Divine!
 Make glad all human hearts to-night!

The day is dying: no farewell
 I utter at its quiet close.
Alone my silent songs I swell
 And pray for comfort and repose.
The sun has pass'd to other skies,
 And darkness deepens to my sight.—
O Thou, to whom the sinner cries,
 Be with all trusting hearts to-night!

THE SUNRISE

(Composed in very early youth)

I saw, triumphant o'er the walls of night,
Girt with an aureole of shimmering fire,
The morning sun upspring in stern desire
And free the fetter'd earth to life and light.
Swept then toward his throne in heaven's height
Wild earth-born voices in one rapturous choir,
Singing the joys that freedom's thoughts inspire
To him, their king, new-crown'd before their sight.
A type, methought, in all save slow degrees,
Of that undying influence which found
Nature immured in darkest mysteries,
And spread the gladdening light of knowledge round,
Till far as morn's proclaiming wings extend,
Earth has no glooms its glances cannot rend.

WRITTEN IN THE SPRING

(*Another childhood poem*)

Methinks 'mid murmurous winds I hear a strain
 Sweeter than all sweet songs of bird or stream,
 Breathed like a lingering echo of a dream
That died by night, at morn revived again.
O'er hill and vale, o'er wood and spangled plain,
 Dim-glimmering thro' the morning's dewy beam,
 Vibrates that sound till evening's mellowing gleam
Fades in the starry night; and listening I remain.
Thus as in some lone hall with garlands drest,
 Where falls again one long-lost footstep's tread,
 Bright visions rise of life and love to be:
Here, in this moonlit hall of night, I rest,
 Hearing the green earth greet her wakening dead;
 And breathe the breath of immortality.

*"SWIFT AS A DREAM AND
RADIANT AS A STAR*

Swift as a dream and radiant as a star,
Behold, behold yon phantom glide away!—
Hope that hath dwelt by heaven's gates afar,
And walk'd the land where lowly Lazarus lay.
She came to me—it was but yesterday;
She promised crowns and kingdoms rich and rare;
I grasp'd her close, I bid her ever stay:
But straight she turn'd—and all was thinnest air!
And can it be all hope is gone from me,
Leaving me lonely as a child from home?
Or shall despair depart? I do not know.
But where last night the wild winds rent the tree,
Reigneth sweet Peace, and silence now hath come;
And all the world lies robed in bridal snow!

*“ERSTWHILE WHEN FELL THE
LONG NIGHTS CLEAR
AND COLD”*

Erstwhile, when fell the long nights clear and cold,
When in bleak valleys heap'd the driven snow,
Sad Fancy knew no beauty hid below
The gleaming mantle and the frozen mould;
But she, while 'round the evening tale was told,
 Dream'd of far lands beside the hearth-fire's glow,
 And pren'd her wings and would a-wandering go
By Tigris stream and Bagdad's shrine of gold.
So ever thus; till on a day there came
 Sounds of soft winds thro' all the greening wood,
 Calling the violets from their mossy lair;
And Fancy then, confess'd of gentle shame,
 Like the sad prodigal in soul subdued
 Drew home with tears and own'd her heart was there.

MORTE D'AMOUR

Cold, cold beseems that once bright-beaming eye;
All discord now those lips' loved melody.
No ghost of love or passion lingers by
To mourn the love so perished utterly;
But where, all strewn, its sacred reliques lie,
Some phantom of remembrance yet may be,
Come like pale worshipper to spend one sigh
For love that loved so long, so hopelessly!
Forgive the thought! I would not do her wrong:
Love cast from heart to heart a hidden skein
Elastic bands that stretch'd from shore to shore;
But she, wild bird of changeful mood and song,
First knew it not, then deem'd their weight a chain,
And rent them forth to re-unite no more!

**“METHOUGHT I STOOD WITHIN
THAT SACRED HALL”**

Methought I stood within that sacred hall,
Where rest the ashes of the mighty dead.
Forth thro' the soundless aisles a spirit led,
Whose form was fair, whose voice was musical.
“Come now” she bid, “before the shadows fall,
And learn what I whom men call Fame, have said
Of one you knew: he sang till life was sped,
Nor craved one legend on this marble wall.
“Kings have their crowns and priests their robes below;
The glory passes when the mortal dies.
This for the gentle singer.” - White as snow
Uprose a bust with golden traceries.
But whose they were I saw not: cocks did not crow
And daylight rent the vision from mine eyes.

“IN EDEN’S BOWERS”

In Eden's bowers the sun of life went down
Which else had shone for an eternal day:
Love walk'd awhile array'd in robe and crown,
But with the fall of darkness where were they?
And Death came in and, wandering there alone,
Beheld where man the fallen creature lay:
Smiled at the sight and knew his reign begun,
And stretch'd his hand and smote the helpless clay.
Thrice-fateful hour! can never prayers restore
One fleeting glimpse of that blest dawn again,
Or yield a respite from our doubts and fears?
Vain, vain the thought! God gives in trust no more!
The die is cast: and Eden must remain
The source alike of happiness and tears.

TO M. C. M.

Far, far away— and yet so near, so near!

I see, I know thee still, as on the day
When first thou dawn'd on my young vision, clear,

And went again— a thousand miles away!

Still falls thy sweet voice on my dreaming ear:

Still leads thy strong soul onward to the fray,
With kindly words to banish doubt and fear

And songs of hope that shame this faltering clay.
And following at thy bidding, unto me

Come visions of rich promise, till I seem

Like some lone pilgrim when before his eyes,
In those far lands beyond the eastern sea,

Dim seen thro' rocky hills and desert gleam

'Mid twilight glooms the walls of Mecca rise!

TO THE SAME

Vision of light and love and gentleness!
Twin-born, meseem'd, with earth's most golden year!
Where now within this wide world's severing sphere
Lingerest thou voiceless? In the toil and stress
Of thy young life, doth ever wind confess,
Soft blowing from the heavens' quarter'd rim,
Of one who dwelleth still in regions dim
Crying, "Return, for I am comfortless."—
Crying, "Return!" —a far-off, phantom cry
Which brings no answer thro' the years far-spent;
Not ev'n the shadow of a beckoning hand!
Farewell! farewell! 'Twere better love should die:
For here it knows no other monument
Than one faint image graven on the sand!

TO THE SAME

As one who midway down the slopes of sleep
And nearing fast his silent journey's close,
Ere yet the pale stars vanish from the deep,
Or drifting vapors settle to repose,—
Hearing sweet music sound doth sudden rise,
As from a stretch of troubled dreams, to find
His soul attuned to mystic harmonies
And wondrous brightness gathering in his mind:
O absent one, beloved far or near!
So was it in those days of long ago
Glad days when first I knew thee; so might be
My second wakening, could I sudden hear
Thy voice by my still bedside whispering low
These words of benediction: Peace to thee!

OMNIA MORIBUNTUR

Why should I sing the flowery fields of May?
Why drink the glad wine of the summer sun?
All beauteous things must early pass away,
Ev'n as a rainbow when the storm is done.
Scarce has the little child gone forth to play
When hoary age, the day of woe, comes on;
And mourners' voices sing the bridal lay;
And bridal wreaths bestrew the monumental stone.
Of Life and Love how soon the tale is told!
As man hath died so man must die again.
Tears do but serve to dim the passing view.
Soon shall I sleep among the brave of old
In some lone grave-yard wash'd by autumn's rain,-
O men of Sodom, brother still to you!

THE EXTREME PESSIMIST

"Alas! what boots the long laborious quest?"
The days of worry and the nights of pain?
From weary labor cometh little gain;
And they who toil not seem most truly blest.
A certain sadness in the human breast,
 A certain darkness in the human brain,
 Render the fondest hopes of mortals vain,
And give but sorrow when we long for rest.
Forgive, O God, that ever thus I cry!
But once I deem'd a special star of heaven
 Watch'd o'er the tuneful bard; Forgive me Thou!
Thy heavens are veil'd: I wander darkly driven
 By circumstance: foredoom'd to live and die,
 Yoked like an ox before the cumbering plow!

TO - - - -

I cannot sing thee as I fain would sing:
Too deep my feelings lie for words or tears;
And the long winter of my wasted years
Brings back no more the wild sweet flowers of spring.
But sweet to me, past all imagining,
Sweet is thy love: to comfort and to bless
It falls like rain upon the wilderness,
A pure and beautiful and holy thing.
Only to have thee near me—only to share
Thy passionate warm kisses—and to feel
Thy bosom beat—and hold thy quickening hand:
This, this to me is bliss beyond compare.
Ask not for words—they cannot more reveal:
For in God's sight we love and understand!

THE HAUNTED HOUSE

Pale ghosts, they say, across its foot-worn floor
Stalk at the dead of midnight. There are heard,
What time by moonless hours the woods are stirr'd,
Voices that echo to the tempest's roar;—
Wild shrieks of elfin laughter—many a cry—
From room and hall deserted long of yore —;
As round about the spectral train flits by,
To bang the sash and swing the creaking door.
No man hath seen the vision. None shall know
What mysteries those darken'd walls confine,
Save the dumb beetle and the bat alone:
But whistling school-boys, homeward wandering slow,
Draw near in silence, fearing to divine
Grim goblins watching by the threshold stone.

ON READING THE LIFE AND WORKS OF ARCHIBALD LAMPMAN *

What need, sweet singer, for the praise of men,
Tho' soon, too soon, thy tuneful lips are dumb?
To thy lull'd ears no sounds that ever come
Can call thee back to busy life again.
But while the great claim reverence, unto thee
Some portion meet of tribute shall belong:
And thou hast won an immortality
Bequeath'd alone upon the sons of song:
For, should this aged earth sink once more in gloom,—
All beauty die,—all glory pass away,—
And never bird voice pipe to darken'd skies:—
Here in thy verse the flowers still would bloom,
Glad nature sing, and beauty live for aye
Would turn a desert to a paradise!

* Canadian Poet born 1861; died 1899.

IN MEMORY OF W. H. W.

A way worn pilgrim from a northern land,
By Hope's dim taper lighted, lately came,
Bearing a token thro' long mid-nights plann'd,
To worship at the temple shrine of Fame.

Dark fell the night; a dense and struggling band
Oppress'd him; till he saw with lamp a-flame
One form serene within the portal stand,
Who stretch'd a hand and spake in friendship's name.

Thine was the voice, and thine the arm to save,
O just and good! How soon the tombing earth
Received thee! Here thy pilgrim bringeth thee
A little flower: It dieth on thy grave,
Near to the sacred dust that gave it birth
And water'd by the tears of memory!

"THE GODS ARE DEAD"

The gods are dead. Their days on earth are done.
No more upon that high Thessalian hill
Dwell the Celestial Beings, sacred still
To Grecian lands beyond the rising sun.
No more forever where deep waters run,
The River Ocean and the severing sea,
Come back the sounds of Sappho's melody,
Or toiling hands that rear'd the Parthenon.
How hath the world grown wiser! Men to-day
Before two brazen idols kneel them down
Greater than God or great Miltiades:
And one is Gold, and one a vampire gray
That flies by night and doeth deeds unknown.
Speak, Pallas! Which the better--those or these?

"IS EARTH NOT SADDER THAN IN DAYS OF OLD?"

Is earth not sadder than in days of old?
A subtle sense of shame does she not bear,
That her prone children, born like gods to share
Immortal beauty, seek Corruption's mould?
Wide, wide along her fruitful fields unroll'd,
From many a haunt where angel feet might fare,
Arise, malodorous as a rich man's prayer,
The pride of office and the greed for gold.
If in these days one gift of noble worth—
Honor, or Love, or Christ-like mind and will,—
Such as of old were heralded at birth
In that white city on the bastion'd hill,—
Were prized of men, then might this ancient earth,
Mountain and valley, sing with gladness still!

"ARISE, O LORD!"

Arise, O Lord! In Thy just wrath arise!
The feet of scorners walk on Zion's hill.
Trampled and soil'd Thy holy temple lies;
And every harp in David's land is still.
In other fields beneath the self-same skies
A crimson harpie stands with dripping bill:
There, there we bow with human sacrifice,
And read in blood the tokens of its will.
Arise, O Lord! The earth cries out to Thee:
Cries out for freedom! We are men no more.
Too long hath madness ruled the helpless land.
Scourge Thou Thy people! Set their vision free!
So may they turn like guilty Saul of yore,
And own the mercy of Thy chastening hand!

Thanksgiving Day

*IN DESPONDENCY**(Mid-winter)*

My roses will not bloom in this cold clime.
Too soon depart the wooing winds of May;
Too brief our summer suns, our autumn's day;
And surly winter comes before his time.
Here, where brave thought should flourish in its prime,
From frozen founts we draw the tuneless lay,
And wait the light of unborn years to pay
The prophet's honor and the minstrel's rhyme.
My heart is worn and weary. Thus I cry:
O for some realm more blest of love and song,
Which rolls forever by some orient star;
There, 'mid the unfading flowers to live and die,
Lull'd by old ocean's crooning winds that throng
From Ceylon's isle or sunny Zanzibar!

“O BEST! O FAIREST!”

O best! O fairest! Fairer than the day
That breaks on far palm islands! Thou, O land,
Which first my waking eyes with wonder scann'd:
Where still my last fond lingering looks would stray!
My native land, what reverence shall I pay?
So broad thy fields, no eye hath ever spann'd;
So deep my love, no man can understand:
I praise, I blame thee,—but I love alway!
Thy seasons change: the green leaves fade and fall:
Soon cold and deep beneath the darkening skies
The gathering snowdrifts heap the wintry plain;
But aye returns glad harvest's festival,
And Peace and Joy like thine own springs arise
To walk in beauty on their ways again!

“THERE IS NO PRISON FOR THE YEARNING SOUL”

There is no prison for the yearning soul:
It ever was, it ever shall be, free,
Save when in bonds of brute servility
It sinks content and seeks no higher goal.
This know they who in Flanders battle roll
 Baek the destroying hosts of Germany,
 Till Freedom's soil, from Alsace to the sea,
Redeem'd from bondage, sees its fields made whole.
Tho' tomb'd and blest in that red burial mould
They sleep at last, the light of those stern eyes
 Quench'd in the withering death flames, they shall be,—
Because of those brave truths men learn'd of old
 When Faith and Freedom dawn'd in England's skies, —
 In life or death the sons of Liberty!

“SOMEWHERE”

Somewhere, in regions vision never knew,
The streamlet flowing thro' the summer land
Starts as a rain-drop from its Maker's hand,
And gathers strength unseen by human view.
Somewhere, when its brief course is hurried thro',
In lonely tracts beside the sea-girt strand
Roll its wild waves o'er bars of drifted sand
And melt its waters in the ocean blue.
Somewhere, O man, this little life you keep
Took on its outward seeming, new and strange,
And grew by silent measures. Well for thee
If, in the hour Death calleth to the deep,
Green isles and sunny waters mark the change,
Not the dull combings of a wintry sea!

*“I DREAM'D OF ANGELS ERE
THE NIGHT WAS DONE”*

I dream'd of angels ere the night was done.
Meseem'd a far-off music 'gan to swell,
A sweeter sound than ever tongue can tell,
And a strange glory, like a dawn begun,
Fell round about me. Straightway, one by one,
Aerial spirits, forms of life and light,
All in the vestal robes of heaven bedight,
Drew near me singing, “Glory to God's Son!”
The vision fled, the glory pass'd away:
Ev'n as a light that fades across the snow,
Pass'd those bright beings, singing, one by one;
And if men deem'd me full of thought that day,
Perplex'd and silent, little did they know
I talk'd with angels ere the night was done!

SISTERS OF MERCY

They come, they come when other hope is fled,
The gentle sisters from their convent hall!
Meek hearts they bring and faith that holds in thrall
The priceless precepts of the Risen Dead.
See, by the hands of Love and Mercy led,
Where sorrows thick as leaves of autumn fall,
They come, as mothers when their children call,
To soothe and bless, and bind the wounded head!
Thus saith One: "Before no sightless eyes
Of idols blindly worshipp'd shall men see
My pitying face unveil'd"; but draw ye near,
Sweet Sisters! - What a world of suffering dies
At one small touch of human sympathy!
God speaks of heaven thro' His angels here!

“SPIRIT OF NATURE”

Spirit of nature! Influence benign!
Thou who abidest in the rocky hills
And the wide ocean and the rippling rills
And shadowy forests dark with many a pine!—
Draw near me. Let thy strong heart beat on mine.
From thee come strength and gladness; thou dost bring
A gift of holy memories, garlanding
The soul that loves thee in a peace divine.
I hear thy voice in every wind that blows;
I feel thy presence in the silent vale,
In tangled shades where woodland waters run.
Thrice-blessed Spirit! every flower that grows
This side of Eden tells the self-same tale,
That God and Nature and Thyself are one!

TASSO IN FERRARA

My soul makes music in a songless land.

Despised of men I walk my ways alone.

Honor and strength have gone from my right hand,

Like wine-drops from a broken vessel flown.

I lived, I loved; - but who shall understand?

I dream'd of glory; -- little have I known!

I craved remembrance; - yonder in the sand

Death digs my grave and rears a nameless stone!

How long to wait! O star of this dim eye! -

Thou light of Love that ever led me on! - -

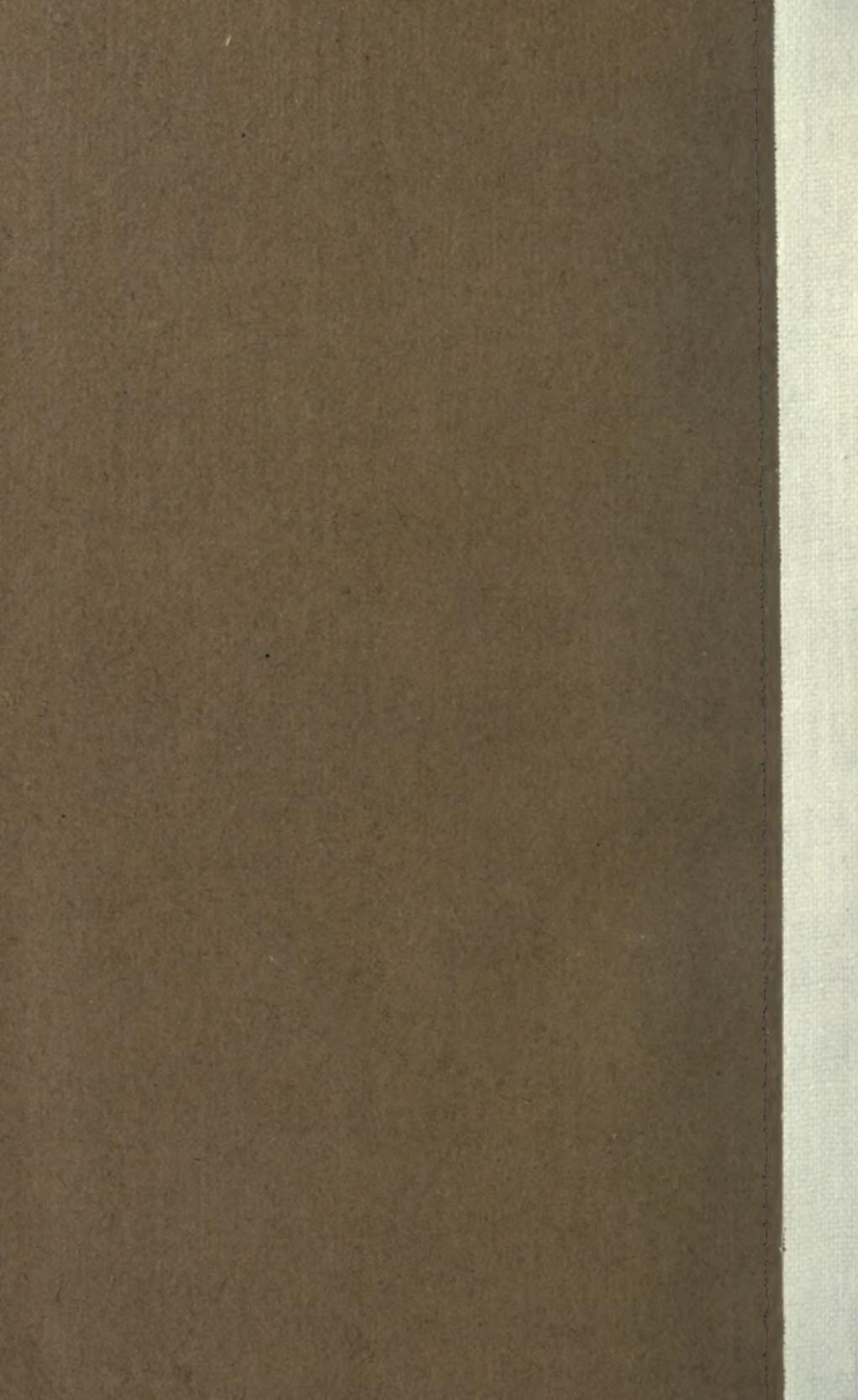
Fade thou before me! Would that I might lie

To-night with hosts that battle ere the dawn!

So might I still in deeds of honor die,

Remember'd with the dead of Marathon!





PS
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R3W3

Wraith, W J
The Wandering Jew and
other poems

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